

## CLAIMS

We claim:

- 1 1. A system for enhancing a content object, comprising:
  - 2 a system for downloading a network resource from a host server to a client;
  - 3 a system for downloading an enhancement mechanism with the network resource,
  - 4 wherein the enhancement mechanism includes:
    - 5 a loading module for requesting and loading the content object from a content
    - 6 server to the client; and
    - 7 an enhancement module for altering an output format of the content object.
- 1 2. The system of claim 1, wherein the network resource is a web page.
- 1 3. The system of claim 2, wherein the content object is an ad.
- 1 4. The system of claim 3, wherein the ad comprises an ad in an industry standard format.
- 1 5. The system of claim 2, wherein the content object is an image.

1 6. The system of claim 2, wherein the enhancement mechanism comprises a plug-in embedded  
2 in the web page.

1 7. The system of claim 6, wherein the plug-in comprises an applet.

1 8. The system of claim 1, wherein the content server is an ad server.

1 9. The system of claim 8, wherein the ad server is a third party server.

1 10. The system of claim 8, wherein the host server acts as the ad server.

1 11. The system of claim 1, wherein the enhancement module converts the content object into a  
2 game.

1 12. The system of claim 3, wherein the enhancement module converts the ad into a game.

1 13. The system of claim 12, wherein the game overlays the ad.

1 14. The system of claim 12, wherein the game partitions the ad into a plurality of smaller images  
2 that can be manipulated by an end user.

1 15. The system of claim 12, wherein the game resides in an area outside of the ad.

1 16. The system of claim 1, wherein the enhancement module instructs the host server to retrieve  
2 the content object.

1 17. The system of claim 1, further comprising a proxy system that obtains the content object from  
2 the content server on behalf of the client.

1 18. The system of claim 2, wherein the enhanced content object is created by replacing an  
2 embedded ad with the embedded enhancement module.

1 19. The system of claim 1, wherein the enhancement module alters the output format of the  
2 content object by providing an informing enhancement that requests a user action.

1 20. The system of claim 1, wherein the content object is altered in real-time.

1 21. The system of claim 1, wherein the content object is loaded into the enhancement  
2 mechanism in one of a plurality of formats that do not require customization.

1 22. An enhancement mechanism for enhancing content, comprising:  
2 a system for loading a content object, wherein the content object comprises data stored in  
3 a predefined format;  
4 an enhancement module selected from a plurality of enhancement modules, wherein each  
5 enhancement module causes a unique alteration of the loaded content object; and  
6 an application programming interface for converting the data from the predefined format  
7 to a format compatible with the selected enhancement module.

1 23. The enhancement mechanism of claim 22, wherein at least one of the enhancement modules  
2 converts the content object into a game.

1 24. The enhancement mechanism of claim 22, wherein at least one of the enhancement modules  
2 comprises an information enhancement.

1 25. The enhancement mechanism of claim 22, wherein the content object comprises an ad.

1 26. The enhancement mechanism of claim 22, wherein the system for loading the content object,  
2 the application programming interface, and the selected enhancement module are contained  
3 within a web page.

1 27. The enhancement mechanism of claim 22, wherein the system for loading the content object  
2 and at least one enhancement module are implemented as Java applets.

1 28. A program product stored on a recordable media that, when executed, comprises:  
2 means for selecting an enhancement module from a plurality of enhancement modules;  
3 means for installing an enhancement mechanism into a requested web page that is to be  
4 downloaded to a client, wherein the enhancement mechanism includes the selected enhancement  
5 module; and  
6 proxy means for retrieving a content object on behalf of the client and causing the content  
7 object to be passed to the client.

1 29. The program product of claim 28, wherein at least one of the plurality of enhancement  
2 modules converts the content object into a game.

1 30. The program product of claim 29, wherein the content object is selected from the group  
2 consisting of: an ad or an image.

1 31. The program product of claim 28, wherein at least one of the plurality of enhancement  
2 modules appends an information enhancement to the content object.

1 32. The program product of claim 28, wherein the proxy means causes an address of the content  
2 object to be modified to point to an address of a host server.

1 33. A method of enhancing content, comprising the steps of:

2 requesting a resource;

3 retrieving and processing the resource, wherein the resource includes an enhancement  
4 mechanism; and

5 processing the enhancement mechanism, including the steps of:

6 retrieving a content object;

7 transferring data from the content object to an enhancement module; and

8 executing the enhancement module such that the data from the content object is  
9 presented in an enhanced format.

1 34. The method of claim 33, wherein the resource comprises a web page, and the resource is  
2 retrieved from a server.

1 35. The method of claim 33, wherein the content object comprises an ad.

1 36. The method of claim 33, wherein the content object comprises an image.

1 37. The method of claim 33, wherein the enhancement module converts the content object into a  
2 game.

1 38. The method of claim 33, wherein the enhancement module comprises an informing  
2 enhancement that appends a message to the content object that requests an action from an end  
3 user.

1 39. The method of claim 38, wherein the message is overlaid on top of the content object.

1 40. The method of claim 38, wherein the message is appended outside of the content object.

1 41. The method of claim 38, wherein the message is displayed intermittently with the content  
2 object.